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| Programme: | Management of natural resources and safeguarding of ecosystem services for sustainable rural development in the South Caucasus (ECOserve) |
| PN: | 2018.2062.0-002.00 |
| Title | Consulting services to elaborate the description of sustainable pasture management institutional framework in RA communities |
| Period: | September 2020 – January 2020 |

1. **Brief programme information**

The programme “Management of natural resources and safeguarding of ecosystem services for sustainable rural development in the South Caucasus” (ECOserve) is part of the wider German support in the priority area “Environmental policy, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in the South Caucasus”.

The objective of ECOserve in Armenia is to improve the preconditions for the Sustainable Pasture Management with particular attention on energy security of the rural population.

In Armenia, the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures (MoTAI) is the lead executing agency, with the Ministry of Environment (MoEnv) and the Ministry of Economy (MoEc) as implementing partners.

For more information visit <https://biodivers-southcaucasus.org/countries/armenia>.

1. **Context**

Since 2018 the Program Coordination Platform for Sustainable Management of RA’s Natural Fodder Areas: Pastures and Grasslands (hereinafter the Platform) is working in Armenia with the aim of coordinating programme activities in the sphere of natural fodder area management, identification of potential cooperation areas among the Platform members and stakeholders, implementation of joint projects, as well as advocating and supporting development of relevant state policy and legislation promoting sustainable use and management of natural fodder areas.

In 2019, the Platform has worked on supporting policy change in the field of sustainable use and management of pastures. In particular, a study on the “Pasture management issues and their causality in the RA” and a “Concept Paper on Sustainable Management of RA’s Pastures” have been elaborated.

According to the RA Pasture Management Concept and the study on Pasture management issues and their causality elaborated in the framework of the Platform, the low level of institutional maturity (development) of Local Self Government (LSG) Bodies is one of the main problems of sustainable management of natural fodder areas. In particular:

* There is no unified and definite institutional format and structure for the management of natural pastures and grasslands at community level, due to which the process varies from community to community.
* The LSG Bodies do not fully accept obligations reserved to them and fail to undertake activities aimed at natural fodder areas management with the assumption that many functions are the duties of the state or pasture users.
* The LSG Bodies have no staff positions for necessary specialists, such as agronomist, veterinarian, soil engineer, as well as field watchmen. As a result, in some cases, the only persons in charge of the management process are the community leader and his/her deputy who have no necessary toolkit. This puts major challenges on the appropriate management of pastures.
* The community enlargement process undertaken in the recent years has not yet been fully perceived by residents of enlarged communities in terms of the natural fodder areas management. As a result, in many cases, community residents continue to keep the former borders of pastures of former communities. At the same time, the Pasture management plans developed by the communities, have not been revised and adapted for the enlarged communities.
* Community enlargement has a double impact on the pasture management process – while in some case it became possible to attract higher investments in the creation and restoration of pasture infrastructure, in many other cases, because of inadequate capacities and lack of relevant procedures there are challenges/obstacles to transfer the patterns of effective pasture management[[1]](#footnote-1) existing in the settlement level to the enlarged community level.

The setting up an adequate institutional structure of the LSG Bodies with clear scope of functions and roles, as well as their distribution among staff of LSG Bodies has been considered of a vital importance for introduction and continuous implementation of the sustainable pasture management practices.

1. **Objectives and tasks**

The objective of the assignment is to elaborate the description of sustainable pasture management institutional framework in RA communities, particularly:

TASK 1. To describe the sustainable pasture management process in communities, including responsibilities, functions and procedure of service provision of LSG Bodies. Sustainable pasture management process should include at least the following phases:

* 1. Planning (e.g. pasture management plans, development and updating of grazing rotation order),
  2. Organization (including decision-making, awareness, etc.)
  3. Control (including monitoring and risk control, etc.)

The description of sustainable pasture management institutional framework should:

* Be in line with current legislative framework regulating the activity of LSG Bodies and their current institutional setup. Moreover, considering the ongoing territorial reforms, the consolidated community setup should be considered.
* Consider the available documents in the field, particularly referring to the institutional framework of LSG Bodies.
* Include those institutional elements and functions introducing sustainable pasture management process in communities, which were successfully piloted and promoted at community level in the frameworks of MoE “Community Agricultural Resource Management and Competitiveness” (CARMAC) and SDA “Livestock Development in the South of Armenia” and “Livestock Development in Armenia – North-South” projects, GIZ supported Environmental Programmes.
* Consider the existing experience in the field, such as the pasture management experience of communities, the experience of the Platform members gained while implementing relevant projects, as well as available guidelines on sustainable pasture management and monitoring.
* Present a complete list of functions, the implementation of which by LSG Bodies and other stakeholders will allow to ensure the efficient and continuous implementation of sustainable management of community and state-owned pastures. The implementation of suggested functions by LSG Bodies and other stakeholders should be realistic.

TASK 2. Discuss and agree the description of sustainable pasture management process with Platform members and correspondent stakeholders on national and local levels.

TASK 3. Develop an operational manual for implementation of administrative functions of LSG Bodies in the field of sustainable pasture management based on the developed description. This manual is expected to officially circulate in communities and will support the uniform introduction and efficient and continuous implementation of sustainable pasture management process bycommunities.

The manual shall include at least the following topics:

* 1. The essence and objectives of sustainable pasture management.
  2. Description of sustainable pasture management process (by functions).
  3. The procedure of sustainable pasture management service provision and necessary steps, including used templates.
  4. Fundamental legal bases required for decision making by law.
  5. The roles of the Community heads, Settlements administrative heads and municipality staff in SPM process, including job responsibilities that should be added in the job descriptions of the LSG Body staff members.
  6. e-governance solutions; electronic communication channels and tools, etc.
  7. Other sections proceeding from the description of sustainable pasture management process.

TASK 4. Present the results during the Platform workshop and consider the feedback for the final documents.

The consultant will work in close cooperation with the assigned representatives from the in close cooperation with Platform Member Organizations and communities and with advisors of GIZ.

1. **Expected outputs**

The expected outputs of the assignment are:

Output 1. Work plan to be elaborated, which needs to be discussed and agreed with the Platform parties

Output 2. Outline of the documents to be developed, which needs to be discussed and agreed with the Platform parties

Output 3. Descriptionof sustainable pasture managementinstitutional frameworkthat ensuresefficient and continuous implementation of sustainable pasture management approaches on communal and state pasturelands.

Output 4. Operational manual for for implementation of administrative functions of LSG Bodies in the field of sustainable pasture management, which also includes templates and procedures for formal introduction and uniform implementation of sustainable pasture management on communal and state pasturelands in communities.

Output 5. Workshops for the stakeholder discussions, including the final workshop in the framework of the Pasture Platform.

Output 6. Final progress report in Armenian and English.

Reports are to be prepared according to the official Ecoserve report format.

All documents shall be delivered electronically in Armenian language to GIZ.

Consultant is expected to coordinate very closely with GIZ Advisors and with the Team Leader of Ecoserve.

Consultant shall report to the Team Leader of Ecoserve.

1. **Time frame and work schedule**

The assignment covers up to 45 working days within September-November 2020:

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| Output 1. Work plan to be elaborated, which needs to be discussed and agreed with the Platform parties | 15 days after the contract sign | Up to 2 WD |
| Output 2. Outline of the documents to be developed, which needs to be discussed and agreed with the Platform parties | 15 days after the contract sign | Up to 2 WD |
| Output 3. Descriptionof sustainable pasture managementinstitutional frameworkthat enablesefficient and continuous implementation of sustainable pasture management approaches on communal and state pasturelands. | 1 month after the contract sign | Up to 10WD |
| Output 4. Operational manual for for implementation of administrative functions of LSG Bodies in the field of sustainable pasture management, which also includes templates and procedures for formal introduction and uniform implementation of sustainable pasture management on communal and state pasturelands in communities. | At the end of the contract | Up to 13WD |
| Output 5. Workshops for the stakeholder discussions, including the final workshop in the framework of the Pasture Platform.  Output 6. Final progress report in Armenian and English. | At the end of the contract  At the end of the contract | Up to 12WD  Up to 6 WD |

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)